

could keep people torn up and upset all the time.

And that's what I tried to bring to this country. And it's amazing. There are people in Washington—I think that it really makes them sad that America's doing so well. They wake up every day trying to think of some way to put us down, this whole country, and get us back to being angry and mad with one another. And I just keep trying to get everybody to look on the bright side and go forward. She is exhibit A. Barbara Boxer is exhibit A.

And if you think about the kind of challenges we're facing for the future, with all the things that are going well here, we still have some significant challenges. Can we really do what we need to do with the environment and still grow the economy? Yes, but we'll have to work together and be in the right frame of mind so we can have honorable, principled, and honest compromises.

Can we really find a way to stop talking about and actually do something about the real and physical isolation of the poorest of our children who have not been touched one whit by this recovery? Yes, but not if we think we can win elections by quick slogans instead of actually doing something about it and not if we think we can do it as one party or one small group, instead of as an American commitment.

Can we really become the world's first truly great multiracial democracy where no race is a majority? That's about to happen here in a generation, about to happen here in California within 3 to 5 years. Yes, we can, but only if we have a certain largeness of spirit where we respect our honest differences of opinion, where we relish our diversity, but where we know underneath our basic humanity unites us and is more important than anything that divides us.

Now, when this election develops and the people that run against Barbara Boxer try to turn her into some kind of cardboard cookie cut-out of who she really is and try to sort of perform reverse plastic surgery on her, you remember that when California was in need, she was there. You remember that every day she is up there actually getting things done. And remember most of all, she has the sort of spirit, quite apart from any vote on any

issue, that is the precondition of America finishing the job of preparing this country for the 21st century and giving all our children the chance to live out their dreams and getting people to be responsible and to serve their communities and to be good citizens and bringing us together as one community.

California will send a signal to America about whether we can do what we need to do in the 21st century because you are already largely there, in ways that are all positive and ways that are somewhat negative. And you have to decide how you will approach what is left to be done. And I'm telling you, this country needs somebody in the United States Senate like Barbara Boxer, somebody who no matter how tough it gets, won't wilt; somebody who will be the same every day; and somebody who will treat her adversaries with dignity and decency and will wake up in a positive frame of mind, because that is a precondition for solving any problem that is fundamentally a human problem. And most of the problems we have left start as an affair of the heart.

So stick with her. I'm glad you're here for the kickoff. I want you to be there in the middle. And I want you to be there at the end. And I want to see you on television celebrating on election night.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

Remarks at a Saxophone Club Reception in Los Angeles

June 23, 1997

The President. I thought he was going to say, "When the son of a migrant farm worker can introduce the redneck grandson of poor dirt farmers." [Laughter] That's what I thought he was going to say.

Paul Rodriguez. The Secret Service cut that joke out. [Laughter]

The President. They take all our fun away.

Thank you, Kevin. Thank you, Paul. Thank you, Campbell Brothers. Thank you, Bennett Kelley, for all your work on the Saxophone Club. I thank Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis and Congressman Brad Sherman, who

were here earlier. And I thank all of you for being here.

I love the Saxophone Club. I love it. I love the idea that we've given so many people who never were in the political process before a chance to be a part of it and to help to forge your own future. I like the fact that most of the people who are in the Saxophone Club are a lot younger than I am. [Laughter] That's not true—I don't like that. [Laughter] But I do like the fact that people who have most of their days in front of them and who have a great stake in what we're doing believe enough in this to be a part of this.

You know, I was just thinking today coming out here to California how wildly different things are here than they were just 5 years ago. And I was thinking how profoundly grateful I feel to all of you for the fact that California voted for me twice, to all of you for the support you've given the policies that we have enacted, to all of you for helping to make it possible for Al Gore and Hillary and me and all of us in our administration to do things that have helped to get the unemployment rate below 5 percent for the first time in 24 years, to get the inflation rate to its lowest point in 30 years, to make America the number one exporter in the world again—and for a Democrat something that's very important—have the biggest decline in inequality among working people in over 30 years. I'm proud of that. And thank you for that.

I'm proud of the fact that we had the biggest drop in crime in 36 years, the biggest drop in the welfare rolls in history. I'm proud of the fact that we've cleaned up more toxic waste dumps in 4 years than they did in the previous 12, and we're going to clean up 500 more next time. I'm proud of that.

I'm proud of the fact that I was able, thanks to you, to get a balanced budget agreement which will have the biggest increase in health care coverage for America's children since Medicaid was enacted in 1965 and the biggest increase in investment for excellence in education in 35 years. And for the first time, if we pass this budget consistent with the agreement, we'll be able to say to every child in this country—

Audience member. What about the NEA?

The President. I'll get to that. [Laughter] We'll be able to say to every child in this country, when they're 10 years old, you will be able to go to college. You will be able to go to college. That's a big deal.

I'm proud of the fact that you've made it possible for us to pursue a policy that says that we can grow the economy and preserve the environment, that we can go forward together, that we don't have to do things like target the NEA or the National Endowment for the Humanities. I never could figure out why we'd want to get rid of spending \$150 million a year, which is a small amount of a \$1.5 trillion budget, to bring the arts and the humanities to people all across the country, in little by-roads, who wouldn't have it otherwise, or to give young artists the chance to fulfill their God-given abilities. I think it's a pretty good investment.

But more than anything else, I'm proud of you. Just look around this crowd tonight. Nine days ago I had the opportunity to come to the University of California at San Diego and give a speech that was very important to me. I had been wanting to talk about it for a long time, asking the American people to join me in a national, honest conversation about race; to have in every community and every neighborhood, on every block, an honest conversation about what it is that still divides us and what unites us that's more important; to identify those laws that we ought to be enforcing that we're not, whatever changes we need to make, what new policies we need, but most important, what attitudes we have to have.

I am convinced that even more than the continuing examples of illegal discrimination, this country is being held back by things that aren't illegal but are equally damaging, that relate to stereotyping one another by race or other category. I am really concerned about it. And in California, you have both the opportunity and the obligation to lead the way in this, which is why I went to San Diego to give this speech. I mean, just look around the crowd tonight.

Today America has one State, Hawaii, which has no majority race. In 3 to 5 years, California will join Hawaii. In 30 to 40 years, America will join Hawaii and California. And for the first time ever, we will have a chance

to see whether all these things we've been saying about America for 100 years are true, that this is not about—this country is not about one race, it's not about one place, it's about a set of ideas and a set of ideals that anybody can share and be a part of and make a future on.

Well, we're about to find out. And it's high time we started thinking about it. What is the unfinished business between black Americans and white Americans? What is the unfinished business that Hispanic Americans have growing out of their unique heritage—and they will soon be the second largest minority group when we're all minority groups in America—what about that? What does it mean to have Los Angeles County with over 150 different racial and ethnic groups? What does it mean not to be the providence of the coast anymore—Wayne County, Detroit, Michigan, has more than 140 different racial and ethnic groups in it. What does all this mean for us?

Can we become the first truly multiracial, great democracy in human history? Can we shed all the historic baggage that's been with us ever since prehistory when our ancient, ancient, ancient ancestors gathered together in bands and traveled across the Earth as hunters and gathers and learned to distrust people who looked different from them because they really had reason to be afraid of them? Why are we still living like that?

Can we get rid of those deep sort of psychological impulses that are inside? How many times did you ever have a day where you couldn't have gotten through the day if you didn't really dislike somebody? [*Laughter*] You say, no matter how bad it is, at least I'm not as bad as that sucker. [*Laughter*] Right? How many days have you—everybody here has had a day like that, right? Everybody here has had a day like that. "I don't think much of myself today, but I sure am better than so and so." [*Laughter*] It's almost like we need this sort of thing.

And we're laughing about it. But we have been given a great gift—and those of you—particularly those of you who are younger have been given a great gift. You're going to grow up and live and raise your children and see your grandchildren grow up in an America where people have more chances

to live out their dreams than ever before—if we can prove that we really can live together as one America, where we not only accept, we actually celebrate what's different about us and we're secure in celebrating it because we know that what we share in common is even more important.

Now, that's really what this is all about. When we started the Saxophone Club in 1992, I had a set of simple little ideas that I wanted to bring to America. I said to myself, what do I want this country to be like when my daughter is my age in the 21st century? I want everybody to have an opportunity who is responsible enough to work for it. I want my country to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom. And I want this country to be coming together instead of being driven apart. I am sick and tired of short-term, destructive, negative political strategies that divide people when we need to be united. That's what I wanted then, and that's what I want now.

Now, so, I say to you, I thank you for being here tonight. I want you to stay active in public affairs. I want you to, every time you hear somebody who is cynical and say it doesn't matter, say, compare how we are today with how we were then. This is what I supported; it was right; it made a difference; people's lives have changed. And then say, but there's a lot more to do, and that's why I'm in it for the long haul.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 p.m. at Bill-board Live. In his remarks, he referred to actor Kevin Spacey; comedian Paul Rodriguez; Bennett Kelley, national cochair, Saxophone Club; and Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Federal Funds for Educational Programs

June 23, 1997

I am pleased with the Supreme Court's decision today which will raise educational standards for children across America. For the last 10 years, school districts have been barred from providing Title I supplemental remedial educational programs to parochial school students in their classrooms. These